

IN THE CLAIMS:

Please amend claims 9, 13, 14, 17, 18 and 19 as follows:

(A copy of the marked-up version of amended claims 9, 13, 14, 17, 18 and 19 are attached to this Preliminary Amendment).

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9. (Amended) A tubular casing according to claim 7 further comprising a tubular fibrous casing located within and co-extensive with said net-like tube, said fibrous casing comprising an inner liner for said net-like tube.

13. (Amended) A tubular casing according to claim 11 wherein the diameter of said net-like tube where said elastic threads become taut is smaller than the maximum diameter of said fibrous casing so that said circumferential and longitudinal threads press inwardly against said fibrous casing.

14. (Amended) A tubular casing according to claim 9 wherein said fibrous casing is folded flat with at least one pleat so that its width is reduced to fit within said net-like tube.

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17. (Amended) A tubular casing according to claim 15 wherein said circumferential thread is secured to said knitted tube such that it forms a continuous spiral along the length of said knitted tube, said longitudinal threads comprise

interlocking loop stitches, each said loop stitch extending between said circumferential threads.

18. (Amended) A tubular casing according to claim 15 wherein said circumferential and longitudinal threads are secured to the outside surface of said knitted tube.

19. (Amended) A tubular casing according to claim 15 wherein the circumferential thread comprises an elastic thread having a predetermined elastic limit, said circumferential threads are elastically extensible and that at said elastic limit said threads become inextensible.

Please add new claims 21-44 as follows:

--21. A tubular casing according to claim 8 further comprising a tubular fibrous casing located within and co-extensive with said net-like tube, said fibrous casing comprising an inner liner for said net-like tube.

22. A tubular casing according to claim 21 wherein said circumferential elastic threads become taut at a diameter which is substantially equal to the diameter of said fibrous casing when it is filled.

23. A tubular casing according to claim 22 wherein the diameter of said fibrous casing is greater than the diameter of said net-like tube so that said circumferential elastic threads apply compressive force to said fibrous casing as it is being filled.

24. A tubular casing according to claim 23 wherein the diameter of said fibrous casing is between 2 and 4 times greater than the diameter of said net-like tube.

25. A tubular casing according to claim 23 wherein the diameter of said net-like tube where said elastic threads become taut is smaller than the maximum diameter of said fibrous casing so that said circumferential and longitudinal threads press inwardly against said fibrous casing.

26. A tubular casing according to claim 12 wherein the diameter of said net-like tube where said elastic threads become taut is smaller than the maximum diameter of said fibrous casing so that said circumferential and longitudinal threads press inwardly against said fibrous casing.

27. A tubular casing according to claim 24 wherein the diameter of said net-like tube where said elastic threads become

taut is smaller than the maximum diameter of said fibrous casing so that said circumferential and longitudinal threads press inwardly against said fibrous casing.

28. A tubular casing according to claim 10 wherein said fibrous casing is folded flat with at least one pleat so that its width is reduced to fit within said net-like tube.

29. A tubular casing according to claim 11 wherein said fibrous casing is folded flat with at least one pleat so that its width is reduced to fit within said net-like tube.

30. A tubular casing according to claim 12 wherein said fibrous casing is folded flat with at least one pleat so that its width is reduced to fit within said net-like tube.

31. A tubular casing according to claim 13 wherein said fibrous casing is folded flat with at least one pleat so that its width is reduced to fit within said net-like tube.

32. A tubular casing according to claim 21 wherein said fibrous casing is folded flat with at least one pleat so that its width is reduced to fit within said net-like tube.

33. A tubular casing according to claim 22 wherein said fibrous casing is folded flat with at least one pleat so that its width is reduced to fit within said net-like tube.

34. A tubular casing according to claim 23 wherein said fibrous casing is folded flat with at least one pleat so that its width is reduced to fit within said net-like tube.

35. A tubular casing according to claim 24 wherein said fibrous casing is folded flat with at least one pleat so that its width is reduced to fit within said net-like tube.

36. A tubular casing according to claim 25 wherein said fibrous casing is folded flat with at least one pleat so that its width is reduced to fit within said net-like tube.

37. A tubular casing according to claim 16 wherein said circumferential thread is secured to said knitted tube such that it forms a continuous spiral along the length of said knitted tube, said longitudinal threads comprise interlocking loop stitches, each said loop stitch extending between said circumferential threads.

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38. A tubular casing according to claim 16 wherein said circumferential and longitudinal threads are secured to the outside surface of said knitted tube.

39. A tubular casing according to claim 17 wherein said circumferential and longitudinal threads are secured to the outside surface of said knitted tube.

40. A tubular casing according to claim 37 wherein said circumferential and longitudinal threads are secured to the outside surface of said knitted tube.

41. A tubular casing according to claim 16 wherein the circumferential thread comprises an elastic thread having a predetermined elastic limit, said circumferential threads are elastically extensible and that at said elastic limit said threads become inextensible.

42. A tubular casing according to claim 17 wherein the circumferential thread comprises an elastic thread having a predetermined elastic limit, said circumferential threads are elastically extensible and that at said elastic limit said threads become inextensible.

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43. A tubular casing according to claim 18 wherein the circumferential thread comprises an elastic thread having a predetermined elastic limit, said circumferential threads are elastically extensible and that at said elastic limit said threads become inextensible.

44. A tubular casing according to claim 37 wherein the circumferential thread comprises an elastic thread having a predetermined elastic limit, said circumferential threads are elastically extensible and that at said elastic limit said threads become inextensible.--

IN THE ABSTRACT:

Please add an Abstract of the Disclosure submitted herewith on a separate page.